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1017 Davis to
notify State

MEMORANDUM

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

5518

ACTIONSECRET/EXDISNSS, DOS
Reviews
Completed.

October 1, 1973

MEMORANDUM FOR: SECRETARY KISSINGER

FROM:

MORI C05125675
Pgs 1-9WILLIAM L. STEARMAN *WLS*

SUBJECT: Recruitment of Khmer Krom

Embassy Phnom Penh has sent two messages (Tab B) urging USG support of FANK recruitment of Khmer Krom in South Vietnam. State requests clearance of a response at Tab A which rejects the Embassy's proposal. We agree with State's position.

Our Embassy believes that Khmer Krom recruitment is required by the urgency of getting FANK's general reserve up to full combat strength before the dry season. The Embassy's proposal calls for a letter to be sent by Premier Lon Nol to President Thieu outlining the following plan: A small Khmer Krom team from Cambodia would, with ARVN assistance, recruit 1,000 Khmer Krom in the Delta; the recruits would then be airlifted to a 4 week training course in Ream, Cambodia after which they would be integrated into the FANK's Second and Seventh Divisions. According to the Embassy, Lon Nol has already approved the provisions of the plan outlined above.

However, the Embassy points out it is unlikely that a GKR request to the GVN would be successful without explicit USG support. State's response notes that President Thieu has previously reacted unfavorably to similar proposals. State and Ambassador Martin therefore feel it would best serve U.S. interests if we do not press Thieu at this time and they argue that we should rather save our influence for possible future use in obtaining vital GVN cooperation on Cambodia. The Department's response also cites as other factors weighing against the proposal the facts that the new Khmer Krom would largely be raw recruits, that successes in Khmer Krom recruitment could weaken the urgency and resolve the GKR to draft Khmer and that the Khmer manpower pool appears large enough to fill the dry

SECRET/EXDIS

SECRET / SENSITIVE

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season requirements for 30,000 replacements. The GKR has finally decided to lower the draft age to 18. (Martin also feels that Khmer Krom recruitment could cause South Vietnam problems in Congress.)

In view of the known attitude of President Thieu and the obvious need for the Khmer to concentrate their primary effort on recruiting at home, we agree with State's view that there should not be a USG initiative on this proposal at this time.

RECOMMENDATION:

That you approve the draft Department of State reply at Tab A.

APPROVE

✓

DISAPPROVE

SECRET / SENSITIVE

TRANSMITTED BY:
(Date & Time Stamp)

RECEIVED BY:
(Date & Time Stamp)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Operations Center

WHITE HOUSE
SITUATION ROOM

LDX MESSAGE RECEIPT

73 SEP 25 PM 8:33

LDX MESSAGE NO. 836, CLASSIFICATION SECRET, NO. PAGES 2
DESCRIPTION OF MSG. CABLE TO PHNOM PENH RE RECRUITMENT OF KHMER KROM

FROM: _____, Officer _____, Office Symbol _____, Extension _____, Room Number _____

LDX TO: _____, DELIVER TO: _____, EXTENSION: _____, ROOM NUMBER: _____

WH - GENERAL SCOWCROFT

FOR: CLEARANCE ☒ INFORMATION ☐ PER REQUEST ☐ COMMENT ☐

REMARKS: _____

VALIDATED FOR TRANSMISSION BY: _____

Executive Secretariat Officer

*S/S modified
of changes (goane)
10-4-73 3:50 P.M.
Eddy*

SECRET

EA/LC:LMRIVES:DTM
9/25/73 EXT 29132
P - AMBASSADOR PORTER

EA/VN:GMARTIN (DRAFT)
EA:NSTEARNS
DOD/ISA:DJDOOLIN (DRAFT)
S/S

EA/VN:RUENZEL
EA/ADHUMMEL
CIA
WH

25X1

PRIORITY PHNOM PENH
ROUTINE SAIGON,

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, CB
SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT OF KHMER KROM

AMB.
LMR
GV
RU
MS
ADH
DJ
SHAC
WH

REF: A PHNOM PENH 9908
B. PHNOM PENH 10457

1. THE RECRUITMENT OF KHMER KROM AS A PARTIAL SOLUTION TO THE FANK MANPOWER PROBLEM HAS BEEN GIVEN HIGH CONSIDERATION. THE CONCLUSION OF ALL AGENCIES, HOWEVER, IS NEGATIVE AS CONCERNS THE PROGRAM PRESENTED REFTTEL. IF THE GKR AND GVN SHOULD REACH AN AGREEMENT ON THEIR OWN FOR SUCH RECRUITING OR FOR KHMER KROM RECRUITING ON A LESSER SCALE WITHOUT ANY US INVOLVEMENT OR PARTICIPATION, WE WOULD HAVE NO OBJECTION.

2. WE BELIEVE, AS DOES AMBASSADOR MARTIN WITH WHOM THIS PROBLEM HAS BEEN DISCUSSED, THAT PRESIDENT THIEU'S VIEWS THIS SUBJECT,

REMAIN NEGATIVE. AMBASSADOR MARTIN ALSO FEELS STRONGLY, AND WE AGREE, THAT IT WOULD BEST SERVE US INTERESTS NOT TO PRESS PRESIDENT THIEU ON A MATTER TO WHICH HE HAS REACTED UNFAVORABLY, IN ORDER TO SAVE US AND AMBASSADOR MARTIN'S INFLUENCE FOR POSSIBLE USE IN OBTAINING VITAL GVN COOPERATION ON CAMBODIA ON ANOTHER OCCASION.

25X1

3. OUR REASONING IS ALSO BASED ON THE FOLLOWING FACTORS. FIRST, THE KHMER KROM TO BE RECRUITED WOULD BE LARGELY RAW RECRUITS AND NOT TRAINED SOLDIERS ALREADY EXPERIENCED AND IN THE ORGANIZED FORMATIONS WHICH WERE THE PRINCIPAL VALUE

SECRET

FORM DS 322A(OCR)

SECRET

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OF THE EARLIER KHMER KROM BROUGHT TO CAMBODIA FROM VIETNAM IN 1970. SECONDLY, WHILE THE PROPOSED NUMBER OF RECRUITS IS SMALL IN COMPARISON WITH THE TOTAL NUMBER NEEDED BY FANK, WE FEEL THAT SUCCESS IN SUCH RECRUITMENT COULD WEAKEN THE URGENCY AND RESOLVE OF THE GKR TO CALL UP ITS OWN PEOPLE. THIRDLY, THE KHMER MANPOWER POOL APPEARS LARGE ENOUGH TO FILL THE ESTIMATED 30,000 REPLACEMENTS NEEDED BY THE END OF THE RAINY SEASON. REAL NEED, AS YOU HAVE POINTED OUT, IS FOR THE GKR EFFECTIVELY TO RECRUIT AND DRAFT THE NEEDED MANPOWER.

4. THUS, WHILE WE AGREE THAT KHMER KROM RECRUITS WOULD BE USEFUL TO FANK IN WHATEVER NUMBERS MIGHT BE AVAILABLE, THE KNOWN ATTITUDE OF THIEU AND THE OBVIOUS NEED FOR THE KHMER TO CONCENTRATE PRIMARY EFFORT ON RECRUITING AT HOME ARGUE AGAINST A USG INITIATIVE ON THIS PROPOSAL AT THIS TIME. YY②

SECRET



Department of State

TELEGRAM

SECRET 464

PAGE 01 PHNOM 10457 290727Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

R 290710Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3197
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON
COMUSSAG

099626

S E C R E T PHNOM PENH 10457

EXDIS

SECSTATE PASS SECDEF, CJCS, CINCPAC

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, CB

SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT OF KHMER FROM

REFS: (A) SAIGON 17141
(B) PHNOM PENH 0908
(C) PHNOM PENH 9634
(D) STATE 168116
(E) PHNOM PENH 8333
(F) STATE 159126C/USA
ANDERSON _____
HOLDRIDGE _____
HORMATS _____
JORDEN _____
KENNEDY _____
LEHMAN _____
LEVINE _____
NEGROPONTE _____
ODEEN _____
RATLIFF _____
RONDON _____
SAUNDERS _____
SONNENFELDT _____
V. I. G. _____
WALSH _____

0/B

1. SINCE SHORING UP FANK'S COMBAT STRENGTH BEFORE THE DRY SEASON BEGINS IN DECEMBER IS IMPERATIVE TO THE SUCCESSFUL DEFENSE OF THE REPUBLIC, WE BELIEVE IT IS ESSENTIAL FOR GKR TO ASK GVN TO PERMIT AND FACILITATE RECRUITMENT OF KHMER FROM IN SVN FOR FANK. DUE TO APPARENT LACK OF GVN ENTHUSIASM FOR ASSISTING GKR IN THIS PARTICULAR WAY, IT WOULD SEEM UNLIKELY THAT A GKR REQUEST WILL BE SUCCESSFUL UNLESS IT HAS USG SUPPORT.

2. IN VIEW OF URGENCY OF FANK'S NEEDS, WE RECOMMEND USG DECISION IN FAVOR OF GKR INITIATIVE SOONEST (REF B CONTAINS OUR PROPOSED SCENARIO).
ENDERS

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

SECRET 724

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C/USA

PAGE 01 PHNOM 09908 171205Z

43
ACTION SS=25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

112137

R 171120Z SEP 73
FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3029
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON
CINCPAC
SECDEF
CJCS
COMUSSAG

SECRET PHNOM PENH 9908

FXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR, CB
SUBJECT: RECRUITMENT OF KHMER KROM

REF: (A) PHNOM PENH 9634

(B) STATE 168116
(C) PHNOM PENH 8333
(D) STATE 159126

1. WE BELIEVE THAT, CONCURRENTLY WITH OUR DRIVE (OUTLINED REF A) TO GET THE GKR TO MOBILIZE SUBSTANTIAL FURTHER MANPOWER FROM DOMESTIC SOURCES FOR FANK BEFORE THE BEGINNING OF THE DRY SEASON IN DECEMBER, A FURTHER GKR EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE WITH GVN TO FACILITATE RECRUITMENT OF KHMER KROM IN SVN. WE CONSIDER THAT THE URGENCY OF GETTING FANK'S GENERAL RESERVE (I.E. MAIN FORCES) UP TO FULL COMBAT STRENGTH BEFORE THE ONSET OF THE ENEMY'S ALREADY-ANNOUNCED DRY SEASON OFFENSIVE AGAINST PHNOM PENH IS SO GREAT THAT WE SHOULD PROCEED WITH THE KHMER KROM RECRUITMENT PROPOSAL EVEN AT THE RISK OF REBUFF BY THIEU. WE WOULD HOPE TO MAKE THE PROJECT LESS UNPALATABLE

ANDERSON _____
HOLDRIDGE _____
HORMATS _____
JORDEN _____
KENNEDY _____
LEHMAN _____
LEVINE _____
NEGROPOITE _____
RATLIFF _____
RONCH _____
SAUNDERS _____
SOKNEFELDT _____
V.I.G. _____
WALSH _____

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E

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TELEGRAM

SECRET

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TO THE GVN BY MODIFYING THE PROPOSAL AND THE MODALITIES OF PRESENTATION WITH A VIEW TO OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN RAISED UP TO THIS POINT BY THE GVN SIDE.

2. PLAN WE PROPOSE IS FOLLOWING:

A. AT OUR SUGGESTION, LON NOL TO SEND A LETTER TO THIEU THROUGH GKR AMBASSADOR POK SAM AN, OUTLINING THE PROPOSAL TO RECRUIT KHMER KROM IN SVN.

B. LETTER WOULD CALL FOR GKR TO SEND RECRUITING TEAM OF APPROXIMATELY TWENTY KHMER KROM MILITARY PERSONNEL IN MUFTI, LED BY A PRESTIGIOUS KHMER KROM OFFICER (FYI. PERSONNEL WOULD PROBABLY BE TAKEN FROM THE SECOND AND SEVENTH FANK DIVISIONS, BOTH OF WHICH ARE COMMANDED BY KHMER KROM BRIGADIERS AND CONTAIN CONSIDERABLE NUMBERS OF KHMER KROM OFFICERS AND MEN.)

C. WITH ARVN FACILITATIVE ASSISTANCE, FANK TEAM WOULD ENDEAVOR TO RECRUIT 1,000 KHMER KROM IN THE DELTA.

D. GKR WOULD PROVIDE A REVOLVING FUND OF ONE MILLION RIELS FOR STAGING EXPENDITURES IN SVN.

E. ARRANGEMENTS FOR AIRLIFT SVN TO REAM (CAMBODIA) TO BE WORKED OUT (SEE REF B).

F. GKR WOULD PAY ENLISTMENT BONUS TO RECRUITS ON ARRIVAL AT REAM (AMOUNT TO BE AGREED). THE REAM TRAINING CENTER WOULD BE PROVIDED 500,000 RIELS.

G. FOUR WEEKS OF INFANTRY TRAINING AT REAM TRAINING CENTER, CAPACITY 2,000.

H. RECRUITS WILL BE TRAINED IN PACKETS OF 50 MEN AND REASSIGNED BY PACKET TO THE SECOND OR THE SEVENTH DIVISION ON COMPLETION OF TRAINING.

I. NO SPECIAL PROVISION FOR FAMILIES; REAM CANNOT ACCOMMODATE THEM. FAMILIES COULD BE BROUGHT TO CAMBODIA AT INDIVIDUAL'S DISCRETION AND EXPENSE AFTER COMPLETION OF TRAINING. HOWEVER, RECRUITMENT EMPHASIS IS TO BE ON BACHELORS.

3. EXCEPT FOR SUBSTITUTION OF GKR AMBASSADOR AND A KHMER KROM OFFICER FOR SON NGOC THANH, LON NOL HAS ALREADY APPROVED PROVISIONS OF PLAN OUTLINED ABOVE (SEE REF C).

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4. WE REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS.
ENDERS

EXD—S—EXD—S—EXD—S

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